IN THE CLAIMS:

Please amend the claims as shown below.

1.   (Currently Amended) An image search apparatus which searches for an image, the apparatus comprising:

image storage means for storing a plurality of images;

region information storage means for storing partial images included in the respective images stored in ~~the~~ said image storage means in correspondence with the respective images;

region feature storage means for storing features of the partial images stored in ~~the~~ said region information storage means in correspondence with the respective partial images;

receiving means for receiving a feature of a ~~search~~ target image as a search condition to search for [[an]] the target image;

search means for searching for an image including a partial image which contains the feature received by said receiving means as a candidate image; and

search result display means for displaying the candidate image, enlarging the partial image that contains the feature, and superimposing the enlarged partial image, of the candidate image, onto the displayed candidate image ~~which corresponds to said search condition, while emphasizing the partial image included in the candidate image~~.

2.   (Previously Presented) The apparatus according to claim 1,

wherein when a plurality of candidate images are obtained on the basis of a search result,

said search result display means displays reduced images of the plurality of candidate

images in the form of a list.

3. to 4.   (Cancelled)

5.   (Currently Amended) The apparatus according to claim [[4]] 1,

wherein said search result display means ~~generates a new single partial image by~~

~~synthesizing~~ superimpose a plurality of partial images ~~from the plurality of images~~ while

keeping a relative positional relationship between the plurality of partial images, if said

search means searches the candidate image having the plurality of partial images which

contain the feature.

6.   (Cancelled)

7.   (Currently Amended) The apparatus according to claim 1,

wherein sizes of a plurality of partial images ~~from the plurality of images~~ are unified to a

predetermined size.

8. to 12.   (Cancelled)

13.   (Previously Presented) The apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the apparatus further comprises switching means for switching display of a plurality of candidate images in said search result display means, and

said search result display means alternately displays the plurality of candidate images at the same position one by one on the basis of a switching instruction from said switching means.

14.   (Previously Presented) The apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said search result display means displays the candidate image in an area with a predetermined size.

15.   (Previously Presented) The apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said search result display means displays a circumscribed rectangular image surrounding each partial image searched out by said search means.

16.   (Cancelled)

17.   (Previously Presented) The apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the region feature storage means stores, as a feature of the image, at least one of concept information expressing a concept obtained from the partial image, text information expressing the concept of the partial image, and an image feature expressing a feature of the partial image.

18.   (Currently Amended) An image search method for an image search apparatus which can be connected to

an image storage unit which stores a plurality of images,

a region information storage unit which stores partial images included in the respective images stored in ~~the~~ <u>said</u> image storage unit in correspondence with the respective images, and

a region feature storage unit which stores features of the partial images stored in ~~the~~ <u>said</u> region information storage unit in correspondence with the <u>respective</u> partial images, said method comprising:

a receiving step of receiving a feature of a ~~search~~ target image as a search condition to search for [[an]] <u>the target</u> image;

a search step of searching for an image including a partial image which contains the feature received by said receiving step as a candidate image; and

a search result display step of displaying the candidate image<u>, enlarging the partial image that contains the feature, and superimposing the enlarged partial image, of the candidate image, onto the displayed candidate image</u> ~~which corresponds to said search condition, while emphasizing the partial image included in the candidate image~~.

19. to 21.   (Cancelled)

22.   (Currently Amended) A computer readable recording medium storing a program for causing a computer, which can be connected to

an image storage unit which stores a plurality of images,

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a region information storage unit which stores partial images

included in the respective images stored in ~~the~~ <u>said</u> image storage unit in correspondence

with the respective images, and

a region feature storage unit which stores features of the partial images in ~~the~~

<u>said</u> region information storage unit in correspondence with the <u>respective</u> partial images,

the program causing the computer to execute:

a receiving step of receiving a feature of a ~~search~~ target image as a search

condition to search for [[an]] <u>the target</u> image;

a search step of searching for an image including a partial image which

contains the feature received by said receiving step as a candidate image; and

a search result display step of displaying the candidate image<u>, enlarging the</u>

<u>partial image that contains the feature, and superimposing the enlarged partial image, of the</u>

<u>candidate image, onto the displayed candidate image</u> ~~which corresponds to said search~~

~~condition, while emphasizing the partial image included in the candidate image~~.